

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A vent filter seal for a sterilization container having planar ~~interior surfaces and exterior surfaces~~ members that enclose an interior space wherein one of the container planar members is a vent planar member that has an interior surface and an exterior surface and a vent in one of the container planar surfaces through which sterilization media can pass through the vent planar member ~~is introduced~~ into the interior space of the container ~~from outside the container~~ and a sheet filter inside the container covering the vent comprising:

a vent recess in ~~an~~ the interior container vent planar surface member surrounding the vent wherein said vent recess is concave relative to the interior surface and said sheet filter is disposed over the interior surface and extends over said vent recess and the vent;

a gasket secured wholly within said vent recess where it is protected against damage ~~and wherein the sheet filter extends over the vent and vent recess;~~ and

a generally planar filter cover having a planar surface with a ~~seal~~ cover ridge in said planar surface surrounding a cover vent wherein said ~~seal~~ cover ridge is coextensive with said vent recess and sized to at least partially fit into said vent recess whereby when said filter cover is operatively secured in place, said ~~seal~~ cover ridge is forced against said ~~gasket and the~~ sheet filter which, in

turn, is forced against said gasket ~~therebetween~~ thereby forming a seal surrounding both the vent and said cover vent.

2. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 1 further comprising:

a protective vent ridge ~~on~~ extending above the exterior ~~planar~~ surface and surrounding the vent.

3. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 2 wherein said protective vent ridge is the opposite side of said vent recess.

4. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 1 further comprising:

a locking mechanism securing said filter cover onto the container vent planar member and urging said ~~seal~~ cover ridge into said vent recess with a positive force.

5. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 4 wherein said vent in said filter cover and the ~~container planar surface containing vent~~ in the vent planar member are spaced apart ~~at the location of the vent~~ a distance greater than the thickness of the filter when said filter cover is ~~locked onto the container~~ operatively secured in place whereby lateral movement of sterilization media between the vent in the container planar member and said cover vent is facilitated.

6. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 5 wherein the vent is a pattern of holes through the container planar member and ~~the filter cover~~ further ~~comprises~~ wherein said cover vent is a pattern of holes through said filter cover within the area defined by said seal cover ridge wherein the holes of the vent and said holes of said filter cover are offset relative to each other when

said filter cover is secured in place.

7-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The vent filter seal of claim 1 wherein said gasket has a generally concave cross-section.

14. (Canceled)

15. (New) The vent filter seal of claim 1 wherein the container planar member containing said vent recess and vent is in a removable lid and said gasket is exposed when said filter cover is removed to change the filter.